

Message Text

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ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-09 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-10 CIAE-00

INR-07 IO-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-07 DODE-00

ERDA-07 MC-02 TRSE-00 COME-00 PM-04 H-02 PA-02 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SIL-01 LAB-04 /132 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4099

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY MADRID

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AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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OES FOR ERDA AND NRC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, FR

SUBJECT: ONGOING REORGANIZATION OF FRENCH NUCLEAR AGENCY

REF: A) PARIS 20567 B) PARIS 18618

SUMMARY: THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE FRENCH NUCLEAR INDUSTRY ANNOUNCED ON AUGUST 4 IS THE LATEST AND PROBABLY THE LAST MAJOR STEP IN THE REORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSARIAT A L'ENERGIE ATOMIQUE, BEGUN IN LATE 1970. THE UNCLASSIFIED

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MAIN OBJECTIVES THUS FAR HAVE BEEN TO PUT THE CEA'S

MASSIVE CAPABILITIES TO WORK IN ASSISTING AND CONTROLLING THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR ENERGY IN FRANCE WHILE LOWERING THE VISIBILITY OF THE 26,000-MAN AGENCY. IN THE PROCESS OVER FIFTY SUBSIDIARIES HAVE BEEN FORMED FROM OPERATING PARTS OF THE CEA. THE ARCHITECT OF THIS REORGANIZATION, CEA ADMINISTRATOR ANDRE GIRAUD, HAS JUST BEEN REWARDED WITH A SECOND 5-YEAR TERM. FOR THE FUTURE HE IS CONFIDENT OF IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN, APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT, TO SPIN OFF TWO MAJOR ACTIVITIES, WITH ABOUT HALF THE CEA'S PERSONNEL, AS SEPARATE UNITS WHOLELY OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY THE CEA. THE INSTITUTE OF FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH WILL REGROUP UNDER AN INDEPENDENT BUDGET ABOUT 1,000 SCIENTISTS. THE PROPOSED "DIRECTION DES PRODUCTION" WILL BE CHARGED WITH URANIUM MINING, IT WILL SEEK TO BE FINANCIALLY SELF-SUSTAINING. THE CEA HAS BEGUN NEGOTIATIONS WITH WESTINGHOUSE AND IS LIKELY TO BUY FROM THE AMERICAN FIRM A 30 PERCENT SHARE IN FRAMATOME, THE ONLY REMAINING CONSTRUCTOR OF CONVENTIONAL NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS. PLANS TO CHANGE THE LICENSE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN FRAMATOME AND WESTINGHOUSE INTO AGREEMENTS OF COOPERATION MAY, HOWEVER HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE EXPIRATION OF THE LICENSE IN 1982. FRAMATOME AND THE CEA ARE SEEKING TO EXTEND THEIR QUASI-MONOPOLY OVER REACTOR CONSTRUCTION INTO THE FAST BREEDER FIELD. THE LIKELY RESULT OF ALL THESE MANEUVERS IS A MORE STREAMLINED RESPONSIVE CEA, EXERTING A TIGHT CONTROL OVER ALL THINGS NUCLEAR IN FRANCE. END SUMMARY.

1) ON THE EVE OF ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY, THE COMMISSARIAT A L'ENERGIE ATOMIQUE IS ABOUT TO EMERGE AS POWERFUL INDUSTRIAL FORCE. IN AUGUST, GISCARD APPROVED THE PLANS OF THE COMMISSARIAT A L'ENERGIE ATOMIQUE (CEA) TO ESTABLISH ITS PRODUCTION (NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE) DIVISION AS A WHOLLY-OWNED SUBSIDIARY, CREATE AN INSTITUTE OF FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CEA, AND ENTER INTO THE REACTOR CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS AS A PARTNER OF FRAMATOME AND WESTINGHOUSE (REF A&B). THIS REPRESENTS THE LATEST AND PROBABLY THE LAST MAJOR UNCLASSIFIED

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STEP IN THE REORGANIZATION OF THE CEA BEGUN IN SEPT 1970. LABOR UNIONS ARE STRONGLY OPPOSING THE PLANS AS JEOPARDIZING EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS AND "PRIVATIZING" OF A GOVT-OWNED INDUSTRY. THUS FAR UNIMPRESSED BY THIS OPPOSITION ARE THE CEA ADMINISTRATORS, WHO DISMISS THE UNIONS AS A WEAK FORCE IN THE HEAVILY PROFESSIONALIZED AGENCY.

BACKGROUND: FROM A TECHNOLOGICAL SINK TO A SCIENTIFIC-INDUSTRIAL HOLDING COMPANY

2) THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE EARLY CEA WAS TO PROVIDE FRANCE ADVANCED NUCLEAR WEAPON CAPABILITY. IN ADDITION, NUCLEAR ENERGY WAS LOOKED UPON AS A MEANS OF REDRESSING THE HISTORIC FRENCH DEFICIENCY IN ENERGY RESOURCES. FINALLY, THE DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AND OTHER HIGH TECHNOLOGIES WAS LOOKED ON AS THE "MOTOR" TO DRIVE THE MODERNIZATION OF POSTWAR FRANCE, A KEY PREOCCUPATION OF THE LEADERS OF THE FOURTH AND FIFTH REPUBLICS.

3) FOR SUCH A MONUMENTAL TASK, THE CEA HAD THE HIGHEST PRIORITY. IT ATTRACTED A DISPROPORTIONATE AMOUNT OF SCIENTIFIC TALENT AND EQUIPMENT, PROMPTING LATER CRITICISMS THAT THE NUCLEAR PRIORITY SKEWED THE SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT OF FRANCE. IN ADDITION, THE CEA DID ALL ITS WORK IN-HOUSE, THUS TENDING TO ISOLATE ITS CAPABILITIES FROM FRENCH INDUSTRY. WHEN THE DECISION WAS TAKEN TO DEVELOP A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAPABILITY, I.S. SHORTLY BEFORE DE GAULLE RE-ENTERED THE GOVT, THE STAFF OF THE CEA NUMBERED ONLY 10,000. TEN YEARS LATER, IT HAD GRIELED AND THE CEA CONSUMED 3.5 PERCENT OF THE ENTIRE GOVT BUDGET.

4) BY 1970, THE CEA HAD GROWN BEYOND ITS MISSION, WHICH WAS DECLINING. THE MILITARY R & D EFFORT HAD BEGUN TO TAIL OFF. THE PIERRELATTE ENRICHMENT PLANT, AN IMMENSE TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT, HAD BEEN FUNCTIONING AT OVER 99 PERCENT CAPACITY FOR 3 YEARS. FINALLY, THE GOVT HAD .../... RUSH

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
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INFO AMEMBASSY ROME
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JUST ABANDONED THE CEA'S GAS GRAPHITE POWER REACTOR. INDEED, WHEN A NEW ADMINISTRATOR, ANDRE GIRAUD, WAS APPOINTED IN SEPT 1970, THERE WERE FEARS THAT THE GIANT ORGANIZATION WOULD BE DISMANTLED. GIRAUD, THE PROTOTYPICAL TECHNOCRAT AND PATRON OF THE POWERFUL CORPS OF POLYTECHNICIENS SET ABOUT TO REORIENT THE CEA'S PRIORITIES FROM MILITARY AND SCIENTIFIC OBJECTIVES TO INDUSTRIAL OBJECTIVES.

5. GIRAUD'S STRATEGY WAS THREEFOLD: FIRST, HE
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CENTRALIZED POWER IN HIS OFFICE AND REORGANIZED THE CEA BY ITS MAJOR FUNCTIONS: FUEL CYCLE (PRODUCTION), MILITARY APPLICATIONS, FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH, NUCLEAR PROTECTION AND SECURITY, NUCLEAR INDUSTRIAL APPLICATIONS, NON-NUCLEAR INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION, AND GENERAL INTEREST. SECOND, HE ATTACKED THE SENSITIVE PROBLEM OF REDUCING THE CEA'S SIZE. FROM A PEAK IN 1968-70 TO PRESENT, PERSONNEL DECLINED BY 10 PERCENT AND GOVT BUDGETARY SUPPORT IN REAL TERMS BY 30 PERCENT. (THE CEA'S EARNINGS IN THE SAME PERIOD INCREASED FIVEFOLD TO OVER \$200 MILLION IN 1974; THUS ITS OVERALL BUDGET FELL ONLY 15 PERCENT). THIRD, TO ENABLE THE CEA'S CAPABILITIES TO PLAY AN INDUSTRIAL ROLE, "FILIALS," OR SUBSIDIARIES, WERE CREATED FROM THE OPERATING PARTS OF THE CEA. BY 1975, OVER 50 SUCH "FILIALS/" HAVE BEEN FORMED. MOST OF THEM ARE SMALL, AND OPERATE WITHIN THE SAME CEA ENVIRONMENT. "FILIALISATION" NOT ONLY ALLOWS UNITE

TO OPERATE ON A BUSINESS BASIS, BUT ALSO SERVES
TO REDUCE THE STAFF OF THE CEA. THE MAIN SUCH FILIALS
ARE:

CISI: GROUPS THE COMPUTER AND INFORMATION CAPABILITIES
OF THE CEA. OF ITS 670 EMPLOYEES, 220 WERE ATTACHED TO
THE CEA UNTIL AN AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED WITH THE UNION
IN MID-1974, CHANGING THEIR STATUS TO EMPLOYEES OF CISI.

EFCIS: PRODUCES AND SELLS SPECIALIZED INTEGRATED CIR-
CUITS. SINCE ITS CREATION, IT HAS STEADILY EXPANDED ITS
STAFF MAINLY BY OUTSIDE HIRE, SO AT THE END OF 1974, IT
EMPLOYED 130 PERSONS INCLUDING 48 FORMER EMPLOYEES OF
CEA AND ONLY 12 PRESENT EMPLOYEES OF CEA.

TECHNICATOME: IS THE CEA'S REACTOR CONSTRUCTION DEPT NOW
SPECIALIZING IN THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF ADVANCED NUCLEAR
REACTORS. IT EMPLOYS 596 PEOPLE OF WHICH 436 ARE CEA
EMPLOYEES. CFMU: COORDINATES THE FRENCH FIRMS PROSPECTING
AND PRODUCING URANIUM IN AFRICA, CANADA, THE U.S. AND AUSTRALIA.

INSTITUTE OF FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH

6. IN 1976, FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH ACTIVITIES EMPLOYED
3,000 EMPLOYEES OF WHICH 1,000 WERE SCIENTIST OR
ENGINEERS AND WERE BUDGETED AT \$120 MILLION. THESE
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ACTIVITIES INCLUDED PHYSICS OF ELEMENTARY PARTICLES
(20.3 PERCENT OF BUDGET), NUCLEAR PHYSICS (26.4 PERCENT),
PLASMA PHYSICS AND CONTROLLED FUSION (10.1 PERCENT) PHYSICS OF
CONDENSED STATES AND ATOMIC PHYCSICS (22.6 PERCENT), AND
BIOLOGY (9.2 PERCENT).

7. THE NEW INSTITUTE OF FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH WILL GROUP
ALL THESE ACTIVITIES. THOUGH CONDUCTED IN FOUR PRINCIPAL
LOCATIONS: CADARACHE, GRENOBLE, FONTENAY, AND SACLAY,
FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH HAD BEEN TREATED SEPARATELY
UNDER A DIRECTORATE SINCE 1970. THE INSTITUTE WILL
HAVE A SEPARATE BUDGET AND WILL RECEIVE GUIDANCE FROM
A SCIENCE COUNCIL. HOWEVER, THE CEA'S ADMINISTRATOR
WILL RETAIN OVERALL POLICY CONTROL AS THE CEA WILL
PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE, FINANCIAL, AND PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
AS WELL AS TECHNICAL SUPPORT. THE REORGANIZATION
BESIDES PROVIDING A WELLDEFINED FUNCTIONAL FOCUS,
AIMS ALSO AT IMPROVING THE CEA'S EFFORTS TO COORDINATE
AND COOPERATE WITH THE AGENCY PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR
FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH, THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR SCIENTIFIC
RESEARCH (CNRS), WITH WHOM IT HAS ALREADY ESTABLISHED
SEVERAL NEW LABS IN COMMON. POSSIBLY, THE CNRS WILL
BE ASKED TO ABSORB AN INCREASING SHARE OF THE
INSTITUTE'S BUDGET.

NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE:

8. THE PROPOSED "DIRECTION DES PRODUCTIONS" WILL GROUP ALMOST ALL OF THE CEA'S ACTIVITIES IN THE NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE, INCLUDING 9,000 EMPLOYEES AND A BUDGET OF ABOUT \$200 MILLION IN 1974. THE GOVT WILL RETAIN FIRM CONTROL THROUGH THE CEA WHOSE ADMINISTRATOR, GIRAUD,

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HAS NAMED HIMSELF AS THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE NEW "FILIAL". A GOAL WILL BE TO APPROACH FINANCIAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY THROUGH THE SALE OF URANIUM ENRICHMENT SERVICES, REPROCESSING, AND WASTE STORAGE, WHICH COVERED 60 PERCENT OF THE BUDGET IN 1974. THE MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRODUCTION SUBSIDIARY ARE:

A. MINES AND CONCENTRATES: THIS WILL INCLUDE A DEPT FOR PROSPECTING AND MINING RESEARCH (220 EMPLOYEES) WHICH WILL PLAN FRENCH PROSPECTING ACTIVITIES, COORDINATE UNCLASSIFIED

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VARIOUS MINING SUBSIDIARIES, ESTIMATE RESERVES AND STUDY NEW PROSPECTING TECHNOLOGIES. IN ADDITION, THERE WILL BE A "SOUS-DIRECTION (SUB-DIVISION) OF OF NUCLEAR URANIUM (800 EMPLOYEES) WHICH WILL COORDINATE PRODUCTION PURCHASES AND TRANSFORMATION OF URANIUM ORE. B). ENRICHMENT: THE SUB-DIVISION OF URANIUM ENRICHMENT IS CHARGED WITH THE PRODUCTION OF ENRICHED URANIUM. THE PIERRELATTE PLANT (2,700 EMPLOYEES) WILL COME UNDER ITS COMPETENCE, AS WILL EURODIF AND COREDIF.

C. FUEL ELEMENTS: A SERVICE FOR MAKING FUEL ELEMENTS EMPLOYING 40 PEOPLE, WILL PRINCIPALLY BE CONCERNED WITH COORDINATING THE WORK OF SUB-CONTRACTORS.

D. REPROCESSING: THE SUBDIVISION OF PLUTONIUM WILL BE CHARGED WITH THE PRODUCTION OF PLUTONIUM, ENRICHED LITHIUM, AND TRITHIUM. IT WILL MANAGE THE RELEVANT FACILITIES AT MARCOULE, LA HAGUE AND MIRAMAS, INCLUDING THE REPROCESSING PLANTS AT MARCOULE AND LA HAGUE.

CEA'S RETURN TO NUCLEAR REACTOR BUSINESS

9. THE PRESIDENT'S AUGUST DECISIONS WILL ENABLE THE CEA TO RETURN TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF CONVENTIONAL NUCLEAR POWER STATIONS. FOLLOWING THE DEMISE OF THE GAS GRAPHITE REACTOR, IT HAD BEEN RESTRICTED TO DEVELOPMENT OF ADVANCED REACTORS. ACCORDING TO CEA ADMINISTRATOR ANDRE GIRAUD, THE CEA IS MAKING PROGRESS ITS NEGOTIATIONS WITH WESTINGHOUSE TO BUY A 30 PERCENT SHARE OF FRAMATOME FROM THE 45 PERCENT NOW HELD BY THE U.S. FIRM. HE EXPECTS A SATISFACTORY OUTCOME BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. HE IMPLIED, HOWEVER, THAT GISCARD'S WISH TO SEE THE LICENSE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN WESTINGHOUSE AND FRAMATOME TURNED INTO AGREEMENTS FOR COOPERATION WILL NOT BECOME EFFECTIVE UNTIL THE EXPIRATION OF THE PRESENT LICENSE AGREEMENT IN 1982. WHAT THE FRENCH APPEAR TO HAVE IN MIND IS JOINT DEVELOPMENT

OF A 1300 MWE NUCLEAR POWER STATION, FOR WHICH THE WESTINGHOUSE CONNECTION WILL PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN PRESSURIZED WATER REACTORS.

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10. AFTER LOSING ITS ONLY TWO CONTRACTS FOR CONSTRUCTING LIGHT WATER REACTOR POWER STATIONS, COMPAGNIE GENERAL ELECTRIQUE MAY BE SQUEEZED OUT OF THE FAST BREEDER CONSTRUCTION. ACCORDING TO GIRAUD, THE GOF DOES NOT WISH TO HAVE ONE CONSTRUCTOR FOR LWR'S AND ANOTHER FOR FBR'S. FRAMATOME AND CEA HAVE THUS ENTERED INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH GAAA WITH A VIEW OF TAKING OVER THIS SUBSIDIARY OF CGE FOR NUCLEAR ENGINEERING. THE CEA ALREADY EXERTS A TIGHT CONTROL ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF FAST BREEDER REACTORS THROUGH ITS TECHNOLOGICAL MONOPOLY AS EXERCISED THROUGH TECHNICATOME. IN TAKING A SHARE IN FRAMATOME, THEN IN GAAA, THE CEA WILL CLEARLY BE THE MASTER OF NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT IN FRANCE, THUS PROVIDING THE GOVT WITH THE CONTROL IT WISHES OVER THIS KEY STRATEGIC INDUSTRY. AS A MEASURE OF ITS CONFIDENCE, AND APPRECIATION, THE GOVT HAS REWARDED GIRAUD WITH A SECOND FIVE-YEAR TERM.

CONCLUSION

11. A STRIKE OF CEA EMPLOYEES ON OCTOBER 7, A THREAT OF A GENERAL STRIKE ON OCTOBER 18, THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CEA, AND INTENSE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE UNIONS AND GIRAUD MAY LEAD TO CERTAIN CONCESSIONS ON EMPLOYEE RIGHTS. HOWEVER, LABOR PROTESTS IN THIS HIGHLY PROFESSIONALIZED AGENCY ARE UNLIKELY TO BLOCK THE INTERNAL REORGANIZATION. FOR THE CEA ADMINISTRATOR, THE REORGANIZATION WILL MEAN NO LOSS OF POLICY CONTROL, AT LEAST NOT FOR THE PRESENT. FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF FOREIGN POLICY, IT WILL HAVE NO DIRECT SIGNIFICANCE EXCEPT IN COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS. HOWEVER, THE CEA'S PARTICIPATION IN FRAMATOME AND ITS PROPOSED AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION WITH WESTINGHOUSE WILL NOT ONLY EXPAND GIRAUD'S MANDATE BUT MAY ALSO POSE NEW SENSITIVE PROBLEMS FOR U.S.- FRENCH RELATIONS, PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO NUCLEAR EXPORTS. WHAT CONTROL, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAVE OVER EXPORTS BY FRAMATOME ONCE THE LICENSE AGREEMENT EXPIRES? WHAT CONTROL WOULD IT HAVE OVER EXPORTS OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY JOINTLY DEVELOPED BY THE CEA AND WESTINGHOUSE, BEFORE WE CAN ADDRESS THESE ISSUES, HOWEVER, WE MUST FIRST WAIT AND SEE WHAT THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN WESTINGHOUSE

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AND THE CEA PRODUCE.
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Message Attributes

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